

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15
STR-04 ITC-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 FEAE-00
OMB-01 /106 W

-----061611Z 093143 /42

R 061533Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8512

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 0289

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL MTN GENEVA

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, GATT

SUBJECT: FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER ROSSI ON FRENCH

POSITION IN MTN

REF: PARIS 35760

1. FRENCH MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE
ANDRE ROSSI, WHO HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH PRIMARY
RESPONSIBILITY IN GOF FOR MTN, GAVE EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW IN DECEMBER ISSUE OF FRENCH ECONOMIC
MONTHLY "L'USINE NOUVELLE" IN WHICH HE ARTICULATED
FRENCH POSITION ON MTN. WHILE THERE IS LITTLE
NEW IN HIS STATEMENT, IT IS WORTH NOTING THIS LATEST
OFFICIAL EXPRESSION OF THE FRENCH POSITION ON THESE
NEGOTIATIONS. MTN PORTION OF INTERVIEW IS TRANSLATED
BELOW.

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2. BEGIN QUOTE. THE RECENT DISCUSSION IN THE
(FRENCH) ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL PROVIDED ME AN
APPORTUNITY TO SPELL OUT IN DETAIL THE FRENCH
POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE TOKYO ROUND IN WHICH
THE INTERNATIONAL REDUCTION OF TARIFF AND NON-TARIFF
BARRIERS WILL BE DEBATED. FOR US,IN FACT, IT IS

NOT A QUESTION OF LIBERALIZATION AT ANY PRICE, BUT
RATHER A NEGOTIATION AIMED AT THE BETTER ORGANIZATION
OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE. WHAT THIS MEANS IS
THAT THE CURRENTLY MOST PROTECTIONIST COUNTRIES MUST
GIVE A GOOD EXAMPLE BY BEGINNING TO REDUCE THEIR CUSTOMS
BARRIERS. WE ALSO SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF "CUTTING
OFF THE TOPS" BY HARMONIZATION RATHER THAN A LINEAR RE-
DUCTION OF TARIFFS. IN EFFECT, LINEAR REDUCTIONS WOULD
NOT CHANGE THE RULES OF THE GAME; AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD
REDUCTION OF A FEW POINTS IN ALL TARIFFS WOULD MEAN
THAT THE HIGHEST DUTIES WOULD STILL REMAIN THE HIGHEST.
FINALLY, WE ARE INTRANSIGENT WITH REGARD TO THE
STRUCTURE OF THE CAP; THIS IS FOR US A MAJOR POINT.
I INTEND ONCE AGAIN TO CLARIFY THE FRENCH POSITION
TO THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES IN THE PARLIAMENT.
END QUOTE.

3. COMMENT: ROSSI ALMOST CERTAINLY HAD US IN
MIND WHEN HE SPOKE OF "CUTTING OFF THE TOPS" AND
"THE MOST PROTECTIONIST COUNTRIES". AS REPORTED
IN REFTEL, HE PROFESSES TO BE OF BELIEF THAT US
IS STRONGLY PROTECTIONIST, AND STANDARD FRENCH
CRITICISM OF US TARIFF CUTTING FORMULA HAS BEEN
THAT IT WOULD FAIL TO ELIMINATE PEAKS (THOUGH FRENCH
ARE WELL AWARE OF TRADE ACT CEILINGS ON TARIFF
CUTTING).
RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRADE, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PARIS00432
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770005-1202
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770175/aaaacnop.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9f6fb8dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PARIS 35760
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3652142
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER ROSSI ON FRENCH POSITION IN MTN
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, FR, GATT, MTN, (ROSSI, ANDRE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9f6fb8dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009